Ministry of
Children and Family Development

2017/18 – 2019/20
SERVICE PLAN

February 2017

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Minister
Accountability Statement

The *Ministry of Children and Family Development 2017/18 - 2019/20 Service Plan* was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared.

Honourable Stephanie Cadieux
Minister of Children and Family Development

February 6, 2017

Table of Contents

Minister Accountability Statement **3**

Purpose of the Ministry **5**

Strategic Direction and Context **6**

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures **7**

Resource Summary **12**

Resource Summary Table 12

Appendices **14**

Appendix A: Ministry Contact Information 14

Appendix B: Hyperlinks to Additional Information 14

Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) works together with Delegated Aboriginal Agencies, Aboriginal service partners and approximately 5,400 contracted community social service agencies and foster homes, cross government and social sector partners to deliver inclusive, culturally respectful, responsive and accessible services to 175,000 children, youth and families in the province. Ministry services are complementary and families may access a combination of services, ranging from early years programs to children and youth with special needs, children and youth mental health, child welfare, adoption and youth justice. Ministry programs and services are coordinated through a provincial office located in Victoria and are delivered through 13 geographic Service Delivery Areas. For information on specific programs and services, visit the Ministry of Children and Family Development internet site.

Strategic Direction and Context

Strategic Direction

The ministry has refocused its strategic priorities and actions over the next three years to achieve its long-term vision of children and youth living in safe, healthy and nurturing families. Taking into consideration many past reports and recommendations made to the ministry, efforts will be redirected towards prevention, early years services, youth transition services to adulthood and supports that help families to stay together. These efforts align with Government's corporate priorities for a Secure Tomorrow, identified in the current *Province of British Columbia Strategic Plan*.

The Minister's Mandate Letter speaks to Government's priorities and a commitment to continuously improve social programs to ensure that children and families have the opportunities they need to be successful. MLA Jane Thornthwaite is supporting the Minister as Parliamentary Secretary for Child Mental Health and Anti-Bullying.

Government's commitment to delivering services well and affordably, as outlined in the Taxpayer Accountability Principles, is reflected throughout this three year plan, which focuses on working together to effectively and efficiently deliver ministry programs and services.

Strategic Context

The Economic Forecast Council (EFC) expects British Columbia's real GDP to grow by 2.3 per cent in 2017 and 2.2 per cent in 2018. Meanwhile for Canada, the EFC projects national real GDP growth of 1.9 per cent in 2017 and 2.0 per cent in 2018. As such, BC's economic growth is expected to outperform Canada in the coming years. Downside risks to BC's economic outlook include the potential for a slowdown in North American economic activity, ongoing fragility in Europe, slower than anticipated Asian demand (particularly in China), and uncertainty in the outlook for the Canadian dollar.

In response to these challenging economic times, the Government of BC remains committed to sound fiscal management for the growth of a strong economy and reconciliation with First Nations to close socio-economic gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal British Columbians. The ministry is supporting Government's overall fiscal discipline through effective budget management, undertaking process improvement activities as part of the cross-government Lean initiative and clarifying and prioritizing its strategic work. This repositioning and efficient use of ministry services supports the goal of making the best use of available resources.

Collaboration with Aboriginal leaders, other government ministries, service delivery partners, communities and organizations will help MCFD to collectively reach its vision of children and youth living in safe, healthy and nurturing families that are strongly connected to their communities and culture.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

Goals have been refined from last year to align with the ministry's renewed focus on prevention, early years and early intervention services and supports that help keep families together. This includes changes to six of the ministry's performance measures in order to measure and report on our progress. A number of additional performance indicators are tracked and publicly available in the ministry's Performance Management Report.

Goal 1: The number of children and youth in care, and particularly the over-representation of Aboriginal children and youth in the child welfare system, will be reduced

Objective 1.1: Children and youth will be supported to safely remain with their families, extended families or be placed in permanent homes that promote a connectedness to their culture

The ministry met with First Nation communities, as represented by Chiefs and other leaders in regional health caucus sessions in fall 2016. These sessions provided opportunities to hear from First Nation leadership throughout the province and helped to confirm the following key strategies:

Strategies

- Provide resources and direct supports to families and communities to ensure that children and youth have every opportunity to safely remain at home with their families
- Focus on seeking permanent living arrangements outside the child welfare system with a focused effort on improving permanency planning and cultural connections for Aboriginal children and youth already in care
- Collaborate with Aboriginal, provincial and federal government partners to address issues of funding and jurisdiction to ensure equitable and culturally safe child and family services for Aboriginal children, youth and families
- Improve and strengthen services to Aboriginal children, youth and their families by increasingly reflecting an Aboriginal perspective in policies, practices and services
- Ensure all staff are provided training regarding individual Aboriginal identities and cultures, including Aboriginal rights and the impacts of inter-generational trauma

- Continue to improve communication, build connections, and work to strengthen and revitalize mutually respectful relationships with Aboriginal partners, leadership, communities and families
- Increase the number of Aboriginal staff at all levels of the ministry
- Work closely with the Ministry of Justice to improve access to justice for Aboriginal people involved in the child welfare system

Performance Measure 1: Rate of Children and Youth in care per 1000 population

Rate of children and youth in care per 1,000 (0-18) population	2014/15 Baseline	2016/17 Forecast	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target
All children and youth	8.1	8.0	8.0	7.9	7.9
Aboriginal children and youth	55.4	55.3	55.2	55.1	55.0
Non-Aboriginal children and youth	3.4	3.3	3.25	3.2	3.2

Data Source: Integrated Case Management System (ICM)

Discussion

Strategies that focus on family preservation and permanency for children and youth will reduce the rate of children and youth in care (CYIC). Last year's measure focused on the rate of Aboriginal children and youth in care. This year, this measure has expanded to look at overall rates and also rates for non-Aboriginal CYIC.

Performance Measure 2: Family Preservation

Percent of children assessed with a protection concern that can live with family or extended family	2015/16 Baseline	2016/17 Forecast	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target
All children and youth	84.4%	84.7%	85.0%	85.3%	85.5%
Aboriginal children and youth	78.9%	79.5%	80.0%	80.5%	81.0%
Non-Aboriginal children and youth	87.9%	88.1%	88.3%	88.9%	89.1%

Data Source: ICM

Discussion

Managing safety such that more children can continue to live with their families results in better education, health and, later, job outcomes for these children while improving the sustainability of the child welfare system. This new measure is the percentage of children who were assessed with a protection concern and, after receiving services, were able to still live with family.

Performance Measure 3: Children and Youth in Care who achieved permanency

Percent of children and youth in care as of March 31 of each year who, after two or more months in care, were placed in a permanent home over the following 12 months	2014/15 Baseline	2016/17 Forecast	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target
All children and youth	19.6%	19.8%	20.0%	20.6%	21.2%
Aboriginal children and youth	14.7%	15.0%	16.0%	17.0%	18.0%
Non-Aboriginal children and youth	24.7%	24.8%	24.7%	24.8%	24.9%

Data Source: Adoption Management System and ICM

Discussion

Permanence is achieved by leaving the care of the Director of Child Welfare through return to family, adoption or permanent transfer of custody under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* (*CFCSA*). This measure is the proportion of children and youth in care more than two months that achieved permanency over a twelve month period. This year, this measure also includes rates for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal CYIC.

Goal 2: Children and youth are supported to reach their potential and grow up as successful young adults, able to contribute to the economy of British Columbia

Objective 2.1: Collaborate with our partners to develop integrated, community based child and family services

Strategies

- Improve outcomes for young children with special needs by enhancing access, effectiveness and coordination of services
- Work with cross-sector partners to develop a system wide approach for supporting mental health and wellness for children and youth
- Work with the Federal Government to support early learning and child care programs and services in communities, including Aboriginal communities
- Enable staff through technology and improved business processes to increase the time available to provide direct client service delivery
- Develop performance measures on accessibility of child and youth mental health (CYMH) services with the intention of reporting on them next fiscal year
- Continue to fund the creation of up to 13,000 new licensed child care spaces by 2020 to improve child care availability

- Continue successful diversion practices to support better outcomes for youth involved in the youth justice system

Performance Measure 4: Access to CYMH Services – Measure Under Development

Performance Measure	2016/17	2016/17 Baseline	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target
Average waiting time to receive services	Develop New Measure	Set Baseline	TBD in 2017/18	TBD in 2017/18	TBD in 2017/18

Data Source: Community and Residential Information System (CARIS)

Discussion

This is a new performance measure for 2017/18 and is under development. 2016/17 will be the baseline year. Working to reduce wait times is a priority for the ministry.

Performance Measure 5: Contracted licensed child care spaces

Performance Measure	2013/14 Baseline	2016/17 Forecast	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target
Average monthly number of contracted licensed child care spaces	98,432	104,000	106,000	108,000	110,000

Data Source: Child Care Operating Funding Program Datamart

Discussion

This measure speaks to the average monthly number of licensed spaces with contracted service providers who receive funding through the Child Care Operating Funding Program. Increasing the number of child care spaces across BC is an objective of the Early Years Strategy.

Performance Measure 6: Youth Justice – First Community Sentence

Performance Measure	2015/16 Baseline	2016/17 Forecast	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target
First Community Sentence per 10,000 Youth Population	21.4	21.0	20.6	20.2	19.8

Data Source: JUSTIN, CORNET

Discussion

This is a new performance measure for 2017/18. Sentencing in the Youth Justice system is often the result of previously poor outcomes throughout childhood. Additionally, outcomes for young people are, on average, better if sentencing youth can be avoided through other types of community justice services (e.g. diversion). This measure looks at those youth who are sentenced under the *Youth Justice Act* and who serve their first sentence in the community, rather than a custody centre.

Goal 3: Youth in care, or formerly in care, have improved well-being outcomes

Objective 3.1: Enhance services, supports and systems to better serve all children and youth and their families and to improve outcomes for children and youth in care

Strategies

- Prioritize recruitment, retention and training in key areas
- Improve data collection and enhance use of data to promote ongoing improvement to programs and services
- Continue implementation of a comprehensive quality assurance system and support staff in the creation of a culture of continuous quality improvement
- Build public and sector confidence in the work of the ministry through increased openness and transparency
- Improve policies and practices related to the interface between social work and legal processes to promote understanding and collaboration in the best interests of the child
- Align the residential system of care to better meet the needs of children and youth, and to provide culturally safe supports that allow Aboriginal children and youth to thrive
- Work with cross-sector partners to ensure consistent practice and provide appropriate services to better support and prepare youth and young adults transitioning to adulthood, helping them to lead healthy and productive lives

Performance Measure 7: High School Completion Rates

Performance Measure	2013/14 Baseline	2016/17 Forecast	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target
Percent of youth in care who turn 19 with a high school credential	47.4%	53.2%	54.7%	55.2%	55.7%

Data Source: ICM, Ministry of Education enrolment data.

Discussion

Education is a key determinant of long term well-being and social inclusion. The strategies in this goal contribute towards supporting youth and young adults for transition to adulthood. The proportion of youth in care who attain a high school credential by age 19 and are at an age appropriate level is a good measure of whether the system of support for youth in care supports their education. This measure includes all youth in care by court order under the *CFCSA*.

Resource Summary

Core Business Area	2016/17 Restated Estimates[1]	2017/18 Estimates	2018/19 Plan	2019/20 Plan
Operating Expenses ($000)				
Early Years Services	305,879	329,670	309,848	309,848
Services for Children and Youth with Special Needs	303,568	331,824	335,395	335,395
Child and Youth Mental Health Services	80,374	96,492	97,658	97,658
Child Safety, Family Support and Children in Care Services	536,918	603,360	611,797	611,500
Adoption Services	30,678	31,203	31,332	31,332
Youth Justice Services	45,157	46,061	46,964	46,964
Service Delivery Support	133,820	142,265	143,610	143,907
Executive and Support Services	14,766	15,047	15,194	15,194
Total	**1,451,160**	**1,595,922**	**1,591,798**	**1,591,798**
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) ($000)				
Service Delivery Support	1,519	4,005	3,816	3,816
Total	**1,519**	**4,005**	**3,816**	**3,816**

Core Business Area	2016/17 Restated Estimates[1]	2017/18 Estimates	2018/19 Plan	2019/20 Plan
Other Financing Transactions ($000)				
Executive and Support Services (Human Services Providers Financing Program)				
Receipts	31	31	31	31
Disbursements	0	0	0	0
Net Cash (Requirements)	31	31	31	31
Total Receipts	**31**	**31**	**31**	**31**
Total Disbursements	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Total Net Cash Source (Requirements)	**31**	**31**	**31**	**31**

[1] For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2016/17 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2017/18 Estimates. Note: There were no restatements required for this planning cycle.

Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates.

Appendices

Appendix A: Ministry Contact Information

General Ministry Enquiries:

Client Relations: **250 387-7027** (in Victoria), or toll-free: **1 877 387-7027**
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Appendix B: Hyperlinks to Additional Information

Contact Us

Ministry's Homepage

Residential Review Project - Final Report

Performance Management Report

Community Living British Columbia

Ombudsperson

Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia

Representative for Children and Youth